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The second Paper read was :—

2. *Description of the Amúr River in Eastern Asia.* By M. A. PESCHUROF,
of the Imp. Russian Navy.

Communicated by Capt. JOHN WASHINGTON, R.N., F.R.G.S., Hydrographer.

[This Paper will be printed in full in the Journal, with a Map.]

THIS account of the Amúr is little more than a picturesque description of its banks, for it is accompanied by few data of any scientific value. This great stream, of 1500 miles in length, is traced from its origin in the two rapid rivers, Shilka and Argum, whence it forces its way through the spurs of the mountain-chain which borders it, whose flanks are dotted with the remains of larch, fir, and white willow, that have been stripped and felled by the nomad tribes, for their encampments. Its banks are mossy rock, almost destitute of earth, and at every valley a copious rivulet runs in. The Amúr valley widens out as the beautiful meadow lands are reached, on which the ruins of the ancient Cossack town, Albazin, are situated. (Albazin was besieged and taken by the Chinese in 1686, and subsequently demolished according to treaty.) Numbers of islands, now increasing to archipelagos, give a peculiar feature to the river, and the birch begins to appear near to the confluence of the Kamara river. This is the head-quarter of the nomad tribes, for the banks of the Kamara abound with fur animals, and the people, near its confluence with the Amúr, cut wood and float it down the latter river. The most northern Manchur guard station is established at this place. The river Zeya bounds the mountainous districts of the Amúr, and here the floating wood is caught and built into rafts. The river now runs through broad plains grazed by cattle and cultivated in patches, with Manchur villages dotted along its banks, amongst which is Aigun, the harbour and yard of the Chinese Manchur fleet, comprising about thirty serviceable one-masted vessels. Hereabouts the oak and elm begin to be found, and the confluence of a large river, the Buruja, is next reached.

At Cape Sverbéef the rapid course of the Amúr begins. It cuts through a chain of high mountains, runs in some places at 5 knots an hour, and has a pretty uniform depth of 4 fathoms. Its width is not stated.

Two islands terminate the rapids ; beyond them are plains, alternately richly wooded and dreary, and then archipelagos of islands to beyond the confluence of the large river Sungari, whose upper banks are very populous, and whose efflux makes the water of the Amúr far more turbid than before. When the Usuri river is passed,

the islands become exceedingly intricate, and there is a large sturgeon fishery. Beyond St. Cyril island, comes a broad reach, and next, diverging arms, and lastly, through a single and a narrowing channel, the Amúr joins the sea.—F. G.

THE PRESIDENT.—We are so fortunate as again to have among us this evening a distinguished traveller in Siberia, Mr. T. W. Atkinson, and I hope he will give us his opinion on this memoir, the value of which is great; as all the positions have been fixed by astronomical observations made by officers of distinction in the Russian service.

MR. ATKINSON, F.R.G.S.—Sir, I have visited the sources of the Amúr, and if you will permit me at some future time, I shall be glad to send a paper to the Society, in which I shall be able to explain and give a much better description of the country I have visited, than I could do at so short a notice.

Sixth Meeting, Monday, February 8th, 1858.

SIR RODERICK I. MURCHISON, PRESIDENT, in the Chair.

PRESENTATIONS.—*The Hon. W. Napier, Lieutenant A. H. Gilmore, R.N., and Mr. James Young were presented upon their election.*

ELECTIONS.—*Lieutenant J. A. Napier Hewett; the Rev. Anthony W. Thorold; Thomas Brown; Frederick D. Goldsmid; and George Seymour, Esqrs., were elected Fellows.*

The first Paper read was—

1. *Report of an Expedition to explore a Route by the rivers Waini, Barama, and Cuyuni, to the Goldfields of Caratal, and thence by Upata to the Orinoco.* By Sir W. H. HOLMES and Mr. W. H. CAMPBELL.

Communicated by the FOREIGN OFFICE.

SIR W. HOLMES and Mr. Campbell sailed from the river Demarara to the mouth of the Waini on August 27th, 1857, whence they made a boat excursion along the Mora Creek to the Barima River, in order to obtain the assistance of Indians for ascending the Waini. The Mora is a natural navigable canal, of 50 or 60 miles long, connecting the Barima and Waini: it might be turned to good account, for its banks are heavily timbered, but its channel is now choked with stumps and fallen trees. The schooner was taken up the Waini as far as the mouth of the Barama River, up which the party proceeded in canoes on September 6th, carrying provisions and articles of exchange. This river was rapid and remarkably tortuous, and the travellers could not reach the Dowaicama cataract and portage till the 12th. This river, the Waini, and the Barima, run through forests of immense timber; Sir R. Schomburgk never saw trees so